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The Winsor School Wins Mass. Bar Association's 2019 Mock Trial State Championship

Boston school prevails over Franklin High School to advance to nationals in Georgia

BOSTON, Mass. — The Winsor School of Boston was today named State Champion of the Massachusetts Bar Association's 2019 High School Mock Trial Program. The Winsor School prevailed against Franklin High School at the 34th Annual Statewide High School Mock Trial Competition Finals, conducted in the Great Hall in Faneuil Hall, Boston. The state title is the Winsor School's sixth state championship since 2010.

Next up for the Winsor School is the National High School Mock Trial Championship in Athens, Georgia, May 16–18. A portion of their trip will be funded by a \$2,500 donation from the Massachusetts Bar Association's philanthropic partner, the Massachusetts Bar Foundation.

Started in 1985, the Massachusetts Bar Association's Mock Trial Program began its 34th year in January. More than 1,500 students at more than 130 high schools from around Massachusetts competed in the 2019 program, which placed high school teams from across the state in simulated courtroom situations where they assumed the roles of lawyers, defendants and witnesses in hypothetical cases.

This year, the teams were presented with a criminal scenario centering around a case of mistaken identity, resulting in a police officer's use of deadly force. The charges were brought under federal law, and teams had to explore and present on issues concerning whether the police officer's use of deadly force was objectively reasonable and, if not, whether the police officer's use of excessive force was willful. The Winsor School played the role of the defense in the finals, and Franklin High School played the role of the prosecution.

The state championship was judged by a three-member panel (a presiding judge, and two scoring judges), similar to the process used at the national mock trial competition. This year's judging panel included Hon. Kenneth V. Desmond Jr., Massachusetts Appeals Court, presiding judge; Hon. Bonnie MacLeod (Ret.), Massachusetts Superior Court, scoring judge; and Hon. Mark D Mason, Massachusetts Superior Court, scoring judge.

Before the championship round commenced, MBA President Christopher A. Kenney spoke to the students: "Mock Trial is a great springboard for you to develop the skills you'll need to become a trial lawyer someday [or] even just for you to be employed in any vocation that you choose to undertake in the future. You will be a better advocate. You will be in a better position to lobby for yourself, for the causes you believe in, and to be an active participant in your communities."

The Mock Trial Program is administered by the Massachusetts Bar Association, with support from the Massachusetts Bar Foundation and Morrison Mahoney LLP. Nearly 150 lawyers across the state volunteered as coaches and judges this year.

Incorporated in 1911, the Massachusetts Bar Association is a non-profit organization that serves the legal profession and the public by promoting the administration of justice, legal education, professional excellence and respect for the law. The MBA represents a diverse group of attorneys, judges and legal professionals across the commonwealth.